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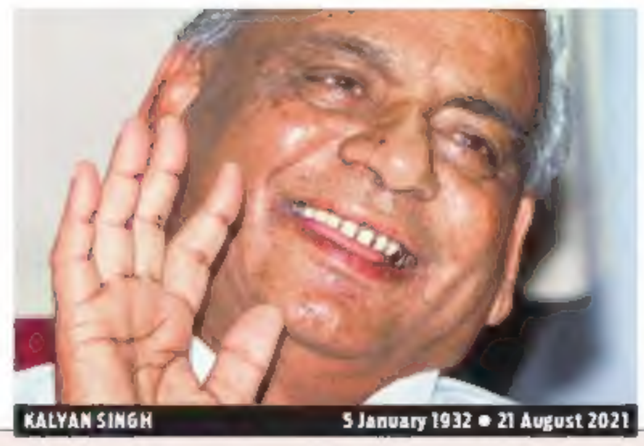

KALYAN SINGH 5 January 1932 • 21 August 2021

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FORMER U.P. CHIEF MINISTER KALYAN SINGH PASSES AWAY

The 89-year-old Hindutva icon and a BJP veteran died at a Lucknow hospital on Saturday after prolonged illness

PLAYED A PART IN RAM TEMPLE MOVEMENT

Singh was admitted in the Intensive Care Unit of Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences on July 4. As per official sources, Kalyan Singh passed away due to sepsis and multi-organ failure. Singh was the OBC face of the BJP during the peak of Mandal politics and played a significant role in advancing the Ram Temple movement

BABRI MASJID FELL UNDER HIS WATCH

- He became the first BJP chief minister of Uttar Pradesh in 1991. A year later, the Babri Masjid fell under his watch on December 6, 1992, which led to the dismissal of his government in UP and three other BJP governments in different states
- Singh also served as Rajasthan governor from 2014 to 2019 | P10

1989
SINGH WAS ARRESTED IN U.P. FOR LEADING THE TEMPLE MOVEMENT

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TRICHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILUPPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Taliban detain, free leaving Indians

About 150 were taken away for questioning in Kabul before being allowed to proceed to the airport; 85 others evacuated

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @New Delhi

THERE was palpable tension in the air in Kabul on Saturday as a batch of about 150 Indian evacuees on their way to the Hamid Karzai International Airport there, were taken away by the Taliban to an unknown location, prompting local media speculation of their abduction.

They were, however, released after questioning and checking of documents, sources said. All of them later reached Kabul airport safely and are expecting evacuation, the sources said, adding that a team of officials is in the city to facilitate their return.

There was no official word though from New Delhi on the development.

A spokesperson of the Taliban denied the reports of abduction. Afghan media reports, quoting a person who managed to jump out of the van with his wife, had earlier claimed that the group was taken away in eight vans around 1 pm. The escapee said the Taliban had told them they would be entering the airport through another gate but he was not sure if that had happened.

The incident came hours after another batch of 85 Indian nationals was evacuated from Kabul and taken to Tajikistan on an Indian Air Force transport aircraft. According to sources, another IAF aircraft is ready to begin evacuation. A few hundred Indians are still stranded in Afghanistan and the government is working on priority to bring back as many Indians as possible, sources said, adding that the special cell on Afghanistan in the Ministry of External Affairs is working round-the-clock on evacuation logistics.

400 Indians still in Af

As per rough estimates, the number of Indians stranded in Afghanistan could be around 400 and India has been looking at ways to evacuate hem

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar spoke to his German counterpart Heiko Maas on the challenges relating to emergency evacuation from Afghanistan.

India had on Tuesday evacuated all its embassy staff and visiting journalists. Though the militia's political leadership had assured New Delhi of the safety of its diplomatic personnel, the Taliban on Thursday raided India's consulates in Kandahar and Herat to rummage for documents and stole parked cars. P9

SOME U.S. EVACUEES BEATEN UP IN KABUL

The Pentagon revealed that a "small number of Americans and Afghans the US want to evacuate, have faced harassment in Kabul. In some cases, they have been beaten up on their way to the airport, the officials said

DOUBLE-SPEAK

While the Taliban announced general amnesty and asked all govt employees to report for work, and activist in Kabul said, "Today some of my friends went to work at the court and the Taliban didn't let them into their offices. They showed their guns and said, you're not eligible to work in this government if you worked in the past one."

STRAY RESISTANCE

Pockets of resistance against the Taliban continue to be active with claims that three districts - Deh Saleh, Bano and Pul-Hesar - in Baghlan province, to the north of Panjshir, have been re-taken

823, NOT 640 PEOPLE ON PACKED U.S. CARGO PLANE

The official caption accompanying an iconic image (above) of a US C-17 heavy lift cargo plane packed with Afghan refugees from Kabul last Sunday had said there were 640 on board. It now transpires that while doing the head count, 183 children sitting on people's laps were inadvertently left out. So, the correct count is 823 passengers, which is a record for the C-17

Assam police nab 14 for posts in support of the Taliban

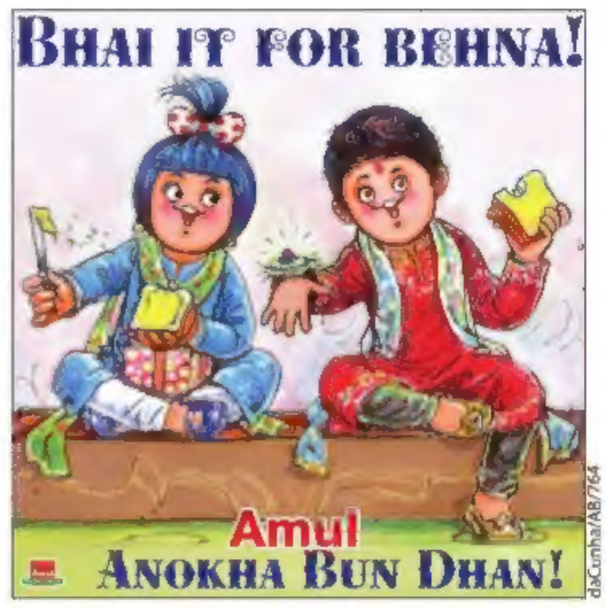
EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Guwahati

THE Assam Police has arrested 14 people, including an MBBS student, for their social media posts in favour of the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan.

The arrests were made in Kamrup, Darrang, Barpeta, Dhubri, Hailakandi, Cachar, Karimganj, South Salmara, Goalpara and Hojai districts on Friday night. All the persons have been booked under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, the Information Technology Act and the Criminal Procedure Code. Police said the accused had posted "adverse/objectionable" comments on the social media supporting the Taliban. Special Director General of Police G P Singh confirmed that one of the persons arrested was an MBBS student while three were Islamic clerics. The official also cautioned people to be extra careful about inflammatory social media posts as their actions, including retweeting or liking them could invite penal action.

Deputy Inspector General of Police Violet Baruah tweeted: "#assampolice are taking stern legal action against pro #Taliban comments in the social media platform that are harmful to the National Security. We're registering criminal cases against such persons."

She appealed to the people to inform police if they came across any objectionable posts on the social media.



CM, minister to visit schools tomorrow

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @Bengaluru

AS schools are set to reopen for students of Classes 9 to 12 in districts with Covid positivity rate of less than 2 per cent, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai and Education Minister BC Nagesh will visit a few schools in Bengaluru on Monday to instill confidence among students, teachers and parents.

Bommai and Nagesh will visit two schools, while the minister will head to two more schools along with officials.

Nagesh told *The New Sunday Express*, "We want to tell the students how serious we are on reopening of schools. The Chief Minister personally visiting schools will make a difference to parents, teachers and students."

Bommai too appealed to the students of Classes 9 to 12 to come to schools and colleges without any fear from Monday.

"The government has made all arrangements and taken all safety precautions. Classrooms have been sanitised and teachers and other non-teaching staff have been vaccinated. Social distancing will be strictly be maintained and classes will be conducted in batches. I request the parents to get vaccinated and pay attention to the health of their children," the Chief Minister said.

Our intention is to let children attend physical classes in a phased manner. It is nearly one-and-a-half-years since they have come to schools.

Basavaraj Bommai, Chief Minister

STAY OFF KABUL AIRPORT, US ADVISES AMERICANS

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

WITH the security situation around Kabul airport getting more dangerous, the US on Saturday advised its nationals to avoid travelling to the airport unless they get individual instructions from a US government representative.

Echoing the ground situation, President Joe Biden said he could not rule out loss of lives during the airlifting of thousands of US nationals and Afghans from the country that was overrun by the Taliban. Apparently, getting past the Taliban checkposts outside Kabul airport is a major hassle, as several Indian evacuees, too, found out on Saturday.

Given the tense situation, Switzerland put off a flight from Kabul. "The security situation around Kabul airport has worsened significantly in the last few hours. A large number of people in front of the airport and sometimes violent confrontations are hindering access to the airport," the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs said.

Amid the chaos, Taliban co-founder Mullah Baradar arrived in Kabul for exploratory talks to form a new government. A Taliban official told Reuters they were trying to build a new model for governing the country, with separate teams for internal security and financial issues. "Experts from the former government will be brought in for crisis management," he said. While the Taliban seek to present a moderate face, activists and locals across the country have reported harsh retaliation against protests.

Deciding to stay put, Pak may gain the upper hand

BALA CHAUHAN @Bengaluru

THE US troop withdrawal from Afghanistan and the fall of Kabul in less than a week is reshaping geopolitics with the regional players coming together as one block against the USA – their common adversary. While the rest of the countries, who have a diplomatic presence in Afghanistan, are evacuating their staff and closing down their missions, four neighbours of Afghanistan – Pakistan, China, Russia and Iran – have decided to stay put giving "regional consensus" to the Taliban.

Pakistan played a crucial role in rendering Kabul to the Taliban and is now demanding their pound of flesh from the Taliban in leveraging their hold in the region. "Islamabad would like to have someone in Kabul, who listens to them. It was for no reason that special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad included Islamabad for Doha talks; to ensure that the militants on the ground backed by Pakistan listen to those on the negotiating table in Qatar," said Professor and Dean, School of Conflict and Security Studies, National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), Dr Suba Chandran.

Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Friday announced that Pakistan will play a "positive role" in the government formation in Afghanistan.

CONTINUED ON: P9

2 K'taka residents to return from Afghanistan today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

OF hundreds of Indian nationals reportedly stranded in Afghanistan, two from Karnataka will make it safely back home on Sunday.

Additional Director General of Police (ADGP), CID, Umesh Kumar, who has been appointed as the nodal officer by the State Government to coordinate with the Ministry of External Affairs, said Fr P Robert Rodrigues from Thirthahalli in Shivamogga district and Fr Jerome Sequeira from Mangaluru city are likely to return to India on Sunday. "Fr Rodrigues' relative had called the control room requesting for assistance for his return to India. We contacted him in return and had forwarded his request to the MEA for co-ordination. They cleared it. Fr Jerome is with Fr Rodrigues. The two are likely to return on Sunday," said Kumar.

Sources, meanwhile, said that the two priests were part of a group of 250 Indians airlifted in two Indian Air Force planes. P7

Af students in Mangaluru seek refugee status

A group of Afghan students studying in Mangaluru have appealed to the government to grant them refugee status, as their return home appears impossible after the Taliban took control. A group of around 50 students and their family members met Mangaluru City Police Commissioner N Shashi Kumar in his office and submitted a representation in this regard. P7

A FreshToHome Initiative
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JAB-O-METER
TAKE YOUR SHOT
August 20 54,71,282 doses
August 21 43,92,759 doses
TOTAL DOSES: 58,08,57,505

NATIONWIDE	AUG 20	AUG 21
Fresh cases	36,571	34,457
Recoveries	36,555	36,347
Deaths	540	375
KARNATAKA	**AUG 20**	**AUG 21**
Fresh cases	1,453	1,350
Recoveries	1,408	1,648
Deaths	17	18

BEST OF MANY WORLDS

HEAT IS ON

State aims to wean away from thermal power

BOSKY KHANNA @Bengaluru

AIMING to ultimately put out burning embers of thermal power plants to address issues of carbon emission and economic baggage these ecologically unsustainable plants carry, the State Government is emphasising on green energy options in its renewable energy policy.

The State started work in this direction after the Centre spelt out its policy on green energy sources, with the focus on solar and wind energy.

The energy department, however, is sceptical and cautious about hydro energy sources as

construction of dams and utilisation of water resources to generate power has political implications, and officials do not want to be on the wrong side of any politician, especially Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai.

"The policy is being revised with stress on green energy sources. To ensure that there is sufficient generation and utilisation all year round, adequate storage mechanisms are being worked upon. Now, renewable energy contributes around 25 per cent of the State's power production and at times, it goes up to 50 per cent. We are working towards gradually reducing usage and dependence on thermal energy and eventually stop it completely. It is not possible to shut down thermal plants immediately," a senior energy department official told *The New Sunday Express*.

CONTINUED ON: P4